

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method and apparatus for distributing picture mail to a frame device community is described. The present invention comprises one or more interconnected frame devices. Each frame device has a display region (e.g. an LCD) surrounded with a border region modeled to resemble a traditional picture frame. The border region may be comprised of wood, plastic, or any other aesthetically pleasing compound. Each frame device is configured to connect to an interconnection fabric to periodically obtain image data from a centralized repository and then display that data according to criteria established by an authorized user. The data repository is populated with image data via the image collection process. In one or more embodiments of the invention, the user may specify filter criteria which establishes what network addresses (e.g. picture mail address) are authorized to populate the data repository. The filter criteria and other information such as the behavior characteristics of each frame device are established and/or managed via a picture box. The picture box resides on a server computer and may be obtained by the user upon demand.

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

This is to certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as Express Mail Label No. EL378242665US, in an envelope addressed to: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Box Patent Application, Washington, DC 20231 on:

December 9, 1999
Marilyn Bass 12-9-99
Marilyn Bass Date